

**Subpart E—Unmanned River
Barges on Lake Michigan Routes**

SOURCE: USCG-1998-4623, 67 FR 19690, Apr. 23, 2002, unless otherwise noted.

§ 45.171 Purpose.

(a) This subpart establishes a special load line regime under which certain unmanned, river-service, dry-cargo barges may be exempted from the normal Great Lakes load line requirements while operating on certain Lake Michigan routes. Depending upon the

route, the barge may only need a limited service domestic voyage load line, or may be conditionally exempted from load line assignment.

(b) Except as provided in this subpart, barges operating on Lake Michigan must have either an international load line assignment issued in accordance with the International Convention on Load Lines, 1966, as amended, or a Great Lakes load line assignment issued in accordance with the requirements of this part.

(c) The requirements of this subpart are summarized in Table 45.171:

**Table 45.171:
Load Line Requirements for Dry Cargo River Barges
Operating on Lake Michigan**

Voyages between Chicago (Calumet Harbor), IL and :				
	Burns Harbor, IN	Milwaukee, WI	St. Joseph, MI	Muskegon, MI
1) Load line requirement	Conditionally exempted from load line assignment (must meet requirements below)		"Limited service domestic voyage" load line	
2) Where to register/apply	Exempted barges must be registered with the USCG Marine Safety Office 215 W. 83 rd St., Suite D Burr Ridge, IL 60521		Apply for load line to ABS Americas 16855 Northchase Dr. Houston, TX 77060	
3) Eligible barges	Dry cargo river barges Built and maintained in accordance with ABS River Rules Length-to-depth ratio less than 22			
	No age limitation	Not more than 10 years old	No age limitation	
4) Freeboard requirement	All barges: freeboard must be at least 24 inches (610 mm) Open hopper barges: coaming height + freeboard must be at least 54 inches (1,372 mm)			
5) Tow limitations	Barges must be unmanned Not more than 5 nautical miles from shore			
	No limit on number of barges	Not more than 3 barges per tow		
6) Cargo limitations	Dry cargoes only. Liquid cargoes, even in drums or tank containers, are prohibited No hazardous materials. HazMats are defined in 46 CFR part 148 and 49 CFR chapter 1, subchapter C			
7) Weather limitations	"Fair weather" only	Ice conditions: adverse conditions that imperil tow or access to shelter Waves: 4 feet (1.2 m)		
If conditions exceed these limits, voyage may not begin, or must be discontinued and vessel must proceed to shelter		Sustained winds: 16 kts from NE, E, SE 21 kts from N, NW, W, SW, S	Sustained winds: 16 kts from N, NW, W, SW 21 kts from NE, E, SE, S	
8) Pre-departure preps:	Required -- as specified in § 45.191			
9) Towboat requirements	Required -- as specified in § 45.191			
(a) Power:	Sufficient to handle tow	Sufficient to handle tow, but at least-- 1,000 HP	1,500 HP	
(b) Communication system:	Recommended -- § 45.195(a)	Recommended -- § 45.195(a)	Required -- § 45.195(a)	
(c) Cutting gear:	Recommended -- § 45.195(b)	Recommended -- § 45.195(b)	Required -- § 45.195(b)	
(d) Operational plan:	Recommended -- § 45.197	Recommended -- § 45.197	Required -- § 45.197	

§ 45.173 Eligible barges.

Only barges meeting the following requirements are eligible for the special load line regime under this subpart:

(a) Unmanned, river service, dry-cargo barges;

(b) Barges that have been designed and built to at least the minimum scantlings of the American Bureau of Shipping River Rules which were in effect at the time of construction;